

Sheep Housing in Trás-os-Montes. Contribution to Design Buildings and Equipment Appropriate for Local Sheep Farms

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Abstract

Sheep farming has a great importance in the region of Trás-os-Montes, one of the most depopulated and least favoured Portuguese areas.

We have studied the buildings for sheep housing, in this region, aiming to identify the aspects that may be considered as constraints or problems that can hinder the development of sheep farming in the region. Thus, we selected several villages where we have interviewed sheep raisers, aiming to get to know the sheep farming system and the sheep housing or facilities utilisation; and where we have collected data concerning the buildings for sheep housing.

The main problems and deficiencies about the buildings for sheep housing we have found are related to aged and old-fashioned buildings; small dimensions; deficient indoor accessibility, which make some mechanization tasks difficult; deficient indoor ventilation and natural lighting; and reduced, or total absence of, equipments or facilities to make tasks concerning sheep handling easier.

In presence of these problems, farm buildings researchers can contribute to improve sheep farming and the regional development by proposing solutions to get better facilities in sheep housing, regarding the specific conditions of the regional sheep.

Keywords: sheep housing; rural development